

Equal Opportunity Policy for Employment

at the

Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection (Industry Division)

Introduction

1.1 The Equal Opportunities Act 2008 Section 9 of stipulates that every employer needs to draw up and apply an equal opportunity policy at its place of work, with a view to minimize the risks of discrimination and promoting recruitment, training, selection and employment on the basis of merit.

1.2 This Equal Opportunity Policy in Employment of the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection (Industry Division) is in conformity with the Guidelines issued by the Equal Opportunity Commission.

2. Policy Statement

The Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection (Industry Division) is committed to building an organisation that makes full use of the talents, skills, experience, competence, desire and willingness to work and different cultural perspectives available in a multi-racial, multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-lingual society, and where people feel they are respected and valued, and can achieve their potential regardless of their status, that is, their age, caste, colour, creed, ethnic origin, impairment, marital status, place of origin, political opinion, race, sex or sexual orientation.

The Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection (Industry Division) will follow the recommendations of the Equal Opportunities Commission as set forth in its Guidelines on Application of an Equal Opportunity Policy at Work in all its employment policies, procedures and practices.

3. Aims of the Policy

The aims of this policy are to ensure that no one receives less favourable treatment, by reason of his or her age, caste, colour, creed, ethnic origin, impairment, marital status, place of origin, political opinion, race, sex or sexual orientation, or is disadvantaged by any conditions, requirements, provisions, criteria, procedures or practices that cannot be justified

on any or more of the above-mentioned grounds, or victimised for taking action against the employer for discrimination or for assisting a fellow employee in taking such an action.

4. Framework for action

4.1 This policy applies to all aspects of employment, from recruitment to termination of employment.

4.2 We will take the following steps to put the policy into practice and implement it:

- ✓ The policy will be strictly adhered to and mainstreamed in the human resource management practices of the Ministry (Industry Division).
- ✓ A focal point will be created in the Ministry (Industry Division) for the day-to-day operation of the policy.
- ✓ The policy will be communicated to all staff of the Ministry (Industry Division) and will be placed on the Ministry's website (Industry Division).
- ✓ All staff will be made aware of the policy; and how the policy will affect the way they carry out their duties and also what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable conduct in the organisation.
- ✓ Staff in key decision-making areas will be made aware on the discriminatory effects that certain provisions, practices, requirements, conditions, and criteria can have on staff, and the importance of being able to justify decisions to apply them.

4.3. Opportunities for employment, training and promotion

Opportunities for employment and promotion will be in accordance with schemes of service, Public Service Commission Regulations and other existing regulations/policies in force and are open to all candidates possessing the required qualification and within the age limit set in the advertisement irrespective of their status, that is, their age, caste, colour, creed, ethnic origin, impairment, marital status, place of origin, political opinion, race, sex or sexual orientation.

Selection for employment and promotion will be in compliance with schemes of service and Public Service Commission Regulations and other regulations/policies in force in the Civil Service irrespective of their status that is, their age, caste, colour, creed, ethnic

origin, impairment, marital status, place of origin, political opinion, race, sex or sexual orientation.

Selection for training will be in accordance with the training needs of the Ministry (Industry Division) as well as guidelines of the donor agency as may be appropriate, while taking into consideration that there is no discrimination on the basis of caste, colour, creed, ethnic origin, impairment, marital status, place of origin, political opinion, race, sex or sexual orientation.

The Staff will be encouraged to develop their skills and qualifications, and to take advantage of promotion and development opportunities in the Industry Division of the Ministry.

4.4. Fair and equitable treatment

Access to benefits, facilities and services, will be fair and equitable, and based solely on merit and not on the status of the employees or prospective employees, that is, age, caste, colour, creed, ethnic origin, impairment, marital status, place of origin, political opinion, race, sex or sexual orientation subject to recommendations made by the Pay Research Bureau, other salary commissioners, the High Powered Committee in the Civil Service or the Cabinet of Ministers.

4.5. Disciplinary action for failure to comply with the Policy

Complaints about discrimination in the course of employment will be regarded seriously, and may result in disciplinary sanctions, in accordance with the PSC Regulations.

4.6. Genuine occupational requirement

- All applicants will be considered, irrespective of their status, that is, their age, caste, colour, creed, ethnic origin, impairment, marital status, place of origin, political opinion, race, sex or sexual orientation provided they satisfy the recruitment criteria laid down in the scheme of service of the relevant post.
- selection criteria will be entirely related to the job or training opportunity.

- grievancès, disciplinary action and terminations of employment will be carried out in accordance with Public Service Commission Regulations.
- Performance Assessment will be made on the basis of discussions between the employee and his/her immediate supervisor and an appeal mechanism will be put in place.
- the effectiveness of the policy will be monitored regularly. A report on progress will be produced each year, and published via the website and notice boards.

4.7 Promotion of Gender Equality

The Ministry will ensure that the working conditions are suitable to both men and women alike.

5. Responsibility for the effectiveness of this policy

5.1 Overall responsibility for the effectiveness of this policy lies with the Manager, Human Resources.

5.2 All staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with this policy. Heads of Section must also make sure their officers know about, and follow, the policy.

5.3 The policy will be placed on the Ministry's website (Industry Division).

6. Approval

6.1 This policy has been endorsed by the Permanent Secretary and has the full support of the management.

6.2 The policy was **approved on 08 May 2014**, following consultation with senior managers and staff.

For further information, please contact the Manager, Human Resources of the Ministry.